

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Serial No.: 10/618,653
Sughrue Ref: Q76188

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are all the claims pending in the application. Of these claims, claims 2-5 have been withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention (i.e., a fuse assembly method).

Claims 1 and 6-10 have been examined in the subject application and rejected on prior art grounds. In particular, these claims have been rejected under 102(b) as being anticipated by Galloway (U.S. Patent No. 4,689,597) and Douglass (U.S. Patent No. 6,157,287). By way of this Amendment, Applicants have amended claim 6 to more clearly recite the invention and added new claim 11. For the following reasons, the above rejections are respectfully traversed.

As recited in independent claim 1, the invention is directed to a fuse belt which includes a plurality of fuse elements 7 and an integral coupling part 8 which interconnects the fuse element. The fuse elements are otherwise conventional and include a pair of terminal pieces which are interconnected by a fusible part and an insulating housing in which at least the fusible part is accommodated. Thus, as recited in claim 1, each of the fuse elements includes a pair of flat terminal pieces, a fusible part, an insulating housing, and a coupling part which couples the flat terminal pieces.

Beginning with the rejection based on Galloway, Galloway discloses an electrical component including a housing 12 having a plurality of contact pairs 14a and 14b interconnected by a fuse element 30, as shown in Figure 1. With reference to Figure 4B, the pairs of contacts are interconnected by carrier strips 70 which the Examiner analogizes to the claimed coupling part. Thus, Galloway discloses plural fuse elements having a common housing. The element

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elements of Galloway cannot be separated from one another to be an individual fuse element, as in the present invention as covered by claim 1. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Galloway.

In the Douglass reference, the Examiner alleges that DIN rail 14 corresponds to the coupling part. However, DIN rail 14 is attached to the fuse holder 12 by engaging the groove 89 of the fuse holder (*See*, column 4, lines 42-44). The fuse holder 12 is the member on which a fuse is mounted. Therefore, it is clearly different from the fuse element in claim 1, which is coupled by the coupling part. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Douglass as well.

With respect to claim 6, Applicants have amended claim 6 to patentably distinguish claim 6 over Galloway as well. More specifically, claim 6 has been amended to recite that the coupling part is integral to the fuse elements. Clearly, the DIN 14 in Douglass is not integral with the fuses, as claims 1 and 6 require. Further, claim 6 has been amended to recite that “removal of said coupling part results in said plurality of fuse elements being separated from each other.” This feature is not taught or suggested by Galloway or Douglass.

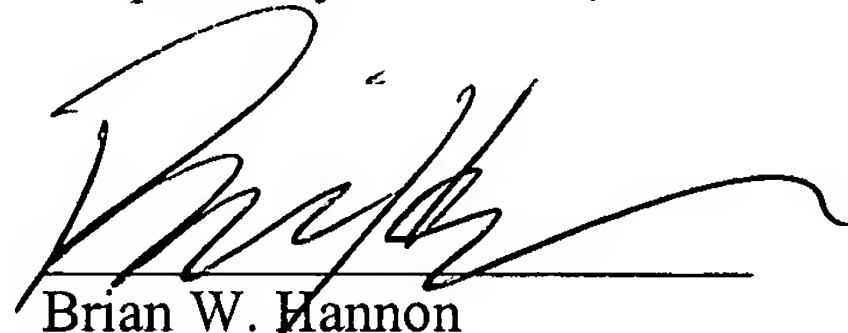
New claim 11 likewise distinguishes over the references for this same reason.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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